

# Missouri State Archives

## Finding Aid RG 4.42

### Office of Lieutenant Governor

#### Harriett Woods, 1985-1989

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*Abstract:* Records of Lieutenant Governor Harriett Woods, including meeting minutes and construction records, 1985-1986 (bulk date, 1985).

*Extent:* 4 folders (.25 Hollinger box)

*Record Description:* Paper.

*Alternative Formats:* None.

*Location:* Missouri State Archives.

### Administrative Information

*Access Restrictions:* No special restrictions.

*Publication Restrictions:* Copyright is in the public domain. Items reproduced for online or physical publication should carry the credit line: Courtesy of the Missouri State Archives.

*Preferred Citation:* [Item description], [Date]; [Box and Folder]; [Series]; Harriett Woods, Record Group 4; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

*Acquisition Information:* Agency transfer. Accession Number 89-012.

*Processing Information:* Processing completed by Amy C. Nickless on 12/6/2023.

### Historical and Biographical Notes

Ruth Harriett Friedman Woods was elected Missouri's first female Lieutenant Governor and first female statewide elected official in 1984. She served one term, ending in 1989. She was also the second Jewish person to serve in a statewide office, after her predecessor Lieutenant Governor Kenneth J. Rothman.

Woods was born on June 2, 1927 in Cleveland, Ohio to Armin Friedman and Ruth Wise Friedman, but grew up in Chicago. Woods earned her bachelor of arts in philosophy from the University of Michigan and served as the first female editor of the campus newspaper. Her first post-collegiate job was with the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, a position which brought her to Missouri. She married *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* editor Jim Woods on January 2, 1953. They settled in University City, and the couple had three sons, Christopher, Peter, and Andrew.

In the early 1960s, Woods began working in local television at KETC (Channel 9) and KPLR (Channel 11) as a writer, moderator, producer, and talk show host covering topics such as child abuse, women's rights, civil rights, and the Vietnam War. Her first political office was as a council member of the University City Council in 1967, where she served for seven years. In 1974, Missouri Governor Kit Bond appointed Woods to the Missouri Highway Commission and the State Transportation Committee. Two years later, Woods was elected to the Missouri Senate as its second female member, and was reelected in 1980.

As a state senator, Woods focused on tax issues, education, and laws affecting the elderly, including nursing home reform, and chaired the Human Resources Committee. She also served on the Education, Ways and Means, and Constitutional Amendments and Reorganization Committees. Woods also ran for the United States Senate in 1982, but lost to incumbent John Danforth.

While serving as Lieutenant Governor, Woods again ran for the federal Senate against Kit Bond and lost. After leaving office, Woods served as the president of the National Women's Political Caucus from 1991-1995, and taught classes on gender and politics at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Pace University, and Hunter College. Woods passed away on February 8, 2007.

## Timeline

Year	Event
1927	Woods was born on June 2 in Cleveland, Ohio.
1933	The Friedman family moved to Chicago.
1953	Woods married Jim Woods on January 2.
1967	Woods appointed to the University City Council.
1974	Woods appointed to the Missouri Highway Commission and the State Transportation Committee.
1976	Woods elected to the Missouri Senate.
1980	Woods won her second term to the Missouri Senate.
1982	Woods ran for the United States Senate and lost to incumbent John Danforth.
1984	Woods ran for Missouri Lieutenant Governor, won the election, and became the first Missouri woman elected to a statewide office.
1986	Woods ran for the United State Senate and lost to Kit Bond.

Year	Event
1991-1995	Woods served as the president of the National Women's Political Caucus.
2007	Woods passed away on February 8.

## Additional Descriptive Information

### Bibliography

“Harriett Woods.” *Historic Missourians*. Access November 30, 2023.

<https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/woods-harriett/>.

“Kenneth Rothman and Harriett Woods: only Missouri Jews to serve as Lt. Governor.” *St. Louis Jewish Light*. Accessed December 6, 2023.

<https://stljewishlight.org/opinion/kenneth-rothman-and-harriett-woods-only-missouri-jews-to-serve-as-lt-governor/>.

Official Manual of the State of Missouri. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Secretary of State. Volumes 1909-1910 through 1999-2000.

<https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/bluebook/search>.

### Related Material

RG 322.01 Board of Public Buildings.

- The Lieutenant Governor serves as secretary of the board.

Harriett Woods Papers (S0051). *The State Historical Society of Missouri*.

Oral History Collection (S0829). *The State Historical Society of Missouri*. Accessed November 30, 2023. <https://collections.shsmo.org/manuscripts/saint-louis/s0829>.

- Includes multiple interviews with Woods.

### Series

The records are organized into the following series:

Correspondence, 1985

Subject Files, 1985-1985

## Correspondence, 1985

*Extent:* 1 folder

*Arrangement:* Chronological

### Scope and Content

The Correspondence series contains a small amount of Wood's 1985 correspondence that was retained by the Lieutenant Governor's office.

### Container List

Box	Folder	Date
1	1	1985

## Subject Files, 1985-1986

*Extent:* 3 folders

*Arrangement:* Alphabetical

### Scope and Content

The Subject Files series contains three records from Woods term.

### Container List

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	2	Press Releases	1986
1	3	Minority Contractors	1985
1	4	“Small Business Entrepreneur Hearing” Lt. Governor Harriett Woods (Printed Folio)	1985